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For Immediate Release

SCIENTISTS DISPEL SUGAR FEARS

WASHINGTON, D.C., August 4--A team of nine leading scientists in the United States has reassured the consuming public that sugar, a pure carbohydrate, like any other widely used food, is harmless when eaten in reasonable amounts.

In 1974 these physicians and dentists, aware of sugar's mounting importance as a food, began to study what was actually known about sugar's effects on health. Working at medical centers and universities across the nation, they report their findings in "Sugar in the Diet of Man," a group of papers recently published in World Review of Nutrition and Dietetics and available as a reprint.

SUGAR IS AN 'ENERGY' FOOD

Harvard's Dr. Fredrick J. Stare reports that of the 100 pounds of sugar consumed each year by the average American, only about 80 pounds actually is eaten. This amount has scarcely changed in 50 years, contrary to claims that sugar consumption is rising in the United States. Dr. Stare points out that 15 to

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20 per cent of the average American's calories come from sugar-- about 12 per cent for adults and 20 per cent or more for teenagers. Sugar is seen by the scientists as a compact source of energy, a primary nutrition need.

SUGAR DOES NOT PROMOTE HEART DISEASE

Sugar is not recognized as a causative factor in cardiovascular disease, according to the scientists. Dr. Francisco Grande, of the School of Public Health at the University of Minnesota and the Jay Phillips Research Laboratory at Mount Sinai Hospital in Minneapolis, shows how unreliable, incomplete and out-of-date are Dr. John Yudkin's arguments that sugar consumption per capita and the death rate ascribed to coronary heart disease are related. "The extensive work dealing with the production of experimental atherosclerosis in animals currently available does not provide any proof of the atherogenic effect of sugar," Dr. Grande said.

OBESITY IS CAUSED BY 'EXCESS CALORIES'

Newer techniques applied to the study of obesity indicate that the number of fat cells or cells capable of storing fat in the newborn is, or soon becomes, fixed for life. With an increase of calories, fat cells increase in size, and this increase is recognized as obesity. Calorie restriction without obvious dieting is the only way to permanent weight control. It can be achieved by a judicious selection of foods, including sugar and

starch, according to three University of Pittsburgh teachers of medicine--Drs. Thaddeus Danowski, Sean Nolan and Thorsten Stephan.

DIABETICS NOW ENJOY NORMAL AMOUNT OF CARBOHYDRATES

"There no longer appears to be any need to restrict disproportionately the intake of carbohydrates in the diet of most diabetic patients," says a statement issued by the American Diabetes Association. Dr. Edwin L. Bierman, professor of medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine (who chaired the committee that wrote it), and Dr. Ralph Nelson, chief clinical nutrition and nutrition therapy, Mayo Clinic, say, "Treatment of the diabetic today is concerned with total calorie intake to attain desirable body weight."

SUGAR DOESN'T CAUSE LOW BLOOD SUGAR SYNDROMES

Low blood sugar syndromes, or hypoglycemia, represent a spectrum of three stages. First, healthy persons can develop a slight decrease in blood sugar level without associated symptoms. There's an intermediate zone of sugar levels when variants from normal or accompaniments of a disease may or may not produce symptoms or signs. At the other end, extremely low blood sugar levels can occur in a variety of illnesses. Hypoglycemia in diabetes under treatment may be corrected by adjustments in diet that may include increasing carbohydrate, as well as medications and control of variables such as emotions and exercise.

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SUGAR IS BUT ONE FACTOR IN DENTAL CARIES

The results of the sugar and dental review suggest there should be an extension of efforts by the dental profession to promote better dental hygiene, plaque control and more extensive use of fluorides and fluoride mouthwashes. Reduction of the frequency of intake and consideration of the form in which sugar-containing products are consumed can in turn reduce caries incidence. This applies particularly to the between-meal consumption of sticky snacks.